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FOLK-LORE SCRAP-BOOK.

NOMINIES.—Among his papers, the editor of this Journal finds in the (London) "Globe," April 28, 1890, an article on the poetic formulas used by the country-folk in England, which is not only charming in itself, but contains information throwing a new light on some of the common rhymes still in use also on this side of the ocean. It appears to him that the interest of the paper justifies its reproduction in a form more accessible.

The author observes that the old-fashioned idea was to put into rhyme anything that should be committed to memory ; in Yorkshire "nominy" is the name given to this class of verse, an appellation very likely derived from the church formula "in nomine Patris" (in the name of the Father, etc.). In the Midlands, "say your speech" is used when any prescribed form is demanded, while farther north "say your nominy" means the same thing. Of these "nominies" the writer gives a collection, observing that it is only in the heart of the country that a garland can be gathered.

When Northamptonshire girls are knitting in company it is usual to say :—

Needle to needle, and stitch to stitch,
Pull the old woman out of the ditch.
If you ain't out by the time I 'm in,
I 'll rap your knuckles with my knitting pin.

The "old woman" "out" and "in" are the arrangements of the wool over and under the knitting pins.

Readers of Southey's "Doctor" will remember the affecting story of Betty Yewdale given in inter-chapter xxiv. She tells us how she and her sister were sent to learn the art of knitting socks from Langdale to Dentsdale in Yorks—"Than we ust at sing a mack of a sang, whilk we were at git at t' end on at every needle, ca'ing ower t' neams of o' t' fwoak in t' Deal—but Sally an' me wad never ca' Dent Fwoak—sea we ca'ed Langdon Fwoak. T' sang was :—

Sally an' I, Sally an' I,
For a good pudding pye,
Taa hoaf wheat, and tudder hoaf rye,
Sally an' I for a good pudding pye.

"We sang this (altering t' neams at every needle); and when com at t' end cried 'off' and began again. An' sae we strave on o' t' day through."

In Cumberland the wool-carders have a rhyme which has formed the basis of several north country songs. It runs :—

Taary woo', taary woo', taary woo', is ill to spin.
Card it well, card it well, card it well ere you begin,
For when carded, row'd and spun,
Then the work is hofelins (half) done ;
But when woven, drest, and clean,
It may be cleading (clothing) for a queen.

Butter is said to "come" at the moment the cream begins to clot, and the nominy is : —

Come, butter, come ; come, butter, come ;
Peter stands at the gate waiting for a butter'd cake.
Come, butter, come.

This was in use in the days of Mary Tudor, and is still used with slight variation in Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire. In the latter county folks sometimes say : —

Churn, butter, churn, in a cow's horn ;
I never seed such butter sin' I was born.

In country parts the bird-scarer or shooer shakes his wooden clappers and shouts : —

Pigeons and crows, take care of your toes,
Or I 'll pick up my crackers and knock you down backards.
Shoo all away, shoo away, shoo !

This is Northamptonshire ; in the southern counties there is a distinct variant : —

Vlee away, blackie cap,
Don't ye hurt measter's crap,
While I vill my tatie-trap (mouth)
And lie down and teak a nap.

A doggerel — in some counties called the hog's prayer — is in constant use among the boys who tend the pigs in the stubble fields after harvest. Its use is to keep a correct account of the porkers, and is read off notches cut on the handles of their whips : —

Two before one, three before five,
Here one, there one, Jack is alive ;
Here two, there two, Jack at the cross,
Here one, there one, Jack is the last.

The notches would be arranged thus (or varied *ad lib.*) : —

ii i iii v, i, i, x,
ii ii x, i, i, x.

In the neighborhood of Huddersfield, boys, while beating wetted bark with a clasp-knife handle to make it slip off easily to form the case of a whistle, say : —

Sip, sap, say ; sip, sap, say,
Lig in a nettle bed while (until) May Day.

Children, flower gathering, have suitable nominies. A village name for the "Shepherd's purse" is "pickpocket." While culling it they say : —

Pickpocket, penny nail,
Put the rogue in the jail.

The *Lazula campestris*, vulg. "Chimney-sweeper," is thus addressed by Cheshire children : —

Chimney-sweeper, all in black,
Go to the brook and wash your back ;

Wash it well or **wash** it none,
Chimney-sweeper, have you done ?

And in most counties the following jingle is repeated on the appearance of the daffodil : —

Daffadowndilly has come to town
In a yellow petticoat and a green gown.

In Derbyshire "Lucy Locket" signifies the Cuckoo-flower. When the children gather it, they say : —

Lucy Locket lost her pocket in a shower of rain,
Milner fun' it, Milner grun' it in a peck of grain.

In his treatment of living small things the village boy is frequently wantonly cruel. The well-known lines, "Harry Harry Longlegs could n't say his prayers," addressed to the crane-fly, sometimes called Daddy Long-legs, are usually accompanied with torture ; and the Dorsetshire children wickedly torment any large white moth they may catch, to the following verse : —

Millery, millery, dousty poll,
How many zacks hast thee a-stole ?
Vowr-an'-twenty an' a peck,
Hang the miller up by 's neck.

In West Somerset they say on seeing a snail : —

Snarley'-orn put out your corn,
Father and mother 's dead ;
Zister 'n brither's out to back door,
Bakin o' barley bread.

They then throw a great stone to crush the poor creatures. The more usual rhyme is : —

Snail, snail, come out of your hole,
Or else I 'll make (or beat) you as black as a coal.

In West Cornwall the boys anger turkeys by shouting in a harsh voice : —

Lubber, lubber leet, look at your dirty feet ;

and in South Cheshire they irritate bulls by continually shouting : —

Billy, Billy Belder, suck'd the cow's elder (udder).

It is pleasant to turn to examples of a kind appreciation of living things, The little insect called ladybird, ladycow, goldenbug, etc., is generally ordered to fly from the hand unharmed, and the lines beginning "Ladycow, ladycow, fly away home" are well known : but in Hampshire the lines are entirely different, running : —

God A'mighty's collycow, fly up to heaven ;
Carry up ten pound, and bring down eleven.

In East Cornwall the bat is addressed so : —

Ary-mouse, ary-mouse, fly over my head,
And you shall ha' a crust a bread,
And when I brew and when I bake,
You shall ha' a piece of my wedding-cake.

It is no idle request, for if a bat "pitches" on to a person's face, it needs a knife to cut the creature off again. Variants are used in other countries. The bird called Peggy Whitethroat is entreated to remain, with —

Pretty Peggy Whitethroat, come stop and give us a note.

POPULAR FORMULAS IN MASSACHUSETTS. — The following mention is made of formulas of speech in Massachusetts, by a writer in the "Adams Freeman," January 12, 1895.

The people of Adams for two generations were really by themselves. The newspaper was a rare visitor, and when it came it was generally read by one to a company. Letter postage was too high to promote correspondence.

A visit to Troy, the market town, was a notable event of rare occurrence, but to Boston or New York there were tearful leave-takings as though it were forever.

The great world was a sealed book to a majority of the people. Each farm almost wholly supplied the family needs, while from necessity every member of the family who could do so took some part in working out the family problem.

The good sense of this people clung to manners of speech their parents brought to Adams, and which *their* ancestors brought from over the sea, — old world sayings with new world application; strong Saxon words and phrases.

Thus, in speaking of one in whom they lacked confidence — "I have a poor conceit, or no conceit, of him" (pronounced consait). To be low spirited was to have the "hypos."

Strength of character was "grit" or "gritty," and to be unstable was "flighty." One capable could "turn himself" or "turn his hand" or "had gumption." Of some girls it was said "they go through the wood, and at last take up with a crooked stick," and of a loving couple, "they live together like two birds in one neast" (nest). "Quit," or "you quit," was a common word with boys. "Pudding-head" was for dull persons. "Too much pudding will choke a dog" phrased a determination to resist importunity to eat more food.

"Puff" with its derivations was used in many ways. Idleness, shiftlessness, and strolling were sharply derided under the head of "poor critters," "spinners of street yearn," "pesky varmints," and other broad terms.

"Praise to the face is an open disgrace," was a common expression.

Children early learned to puncture shams and foolish talkers in rhyme. The following seemed to be a complete overthrow for big talk : —

Nigger in the wood-pile,
Don't you hear him holler?
Come down to my house to-night,
I 'll give you half a dollar.

Admonition to piety and the penalty of disobedience : —